those of the same epoch. Mirrors were so dear then, that Mazarin bought one for 20,000 frs. and still, the finest did not exceed 42 inches by 26, and even glass was so dear, that portraits were covered with plates of talc for preservation. As the use of bells in houses was not known, a hundred domestics crowded the halls and corridors of the rich. The description which our author gives of the streets of Paris, makes one believe, at last, that *we* have attained a little civilization after all. They were narrow, dark, most dirty, and covered with impurities of all sorts.

The Suez Canal.—The engineers of the Lloyd Austriaco, who had been in Egypt to study the locality, where the intended canal has to end in the latter country, have returned home. The Pasha gave them the assurance, that the views of England, France, and Austria were in accordance on this subject: he would go to work. As, however, the embankment of the Nile is to be completed first, nothing can be done with the canal for at least the next three years.

Posthumous Honour to Gaertner.—The Committee for rebuilding the large theatre at Pesth, lately destroyed by fire—thought that the competition designs for the new house would be best judged if submitted to the examination of the *first talent* of the age, wherever it might be found. They therefore addressed, with the sanction of the Supreme Board at Vienna, letters of invitation to Messrs. Gaertner and Schickler, at Munich, to proceed to Pesth for the examining of the plans. Unfortunately the great architect was no more, when he was thus honourably distinguished, but Mr. S. (on whom the judging of the internal decoration devolves) has already proceeded on his journey.

Art News from Bonn.—The restoration of the Minster has been completed as far as present means will permit. Still, the fine cloister, ruinous in many places, waits for a restoring hand, which is wanted not only for the lower vaults, but also for opening the galleries of the first floor, which a subsequent age has disfigured with their stupid patchwork. Most art-friends had wished for a restoration of the old Ramensdorf Chapel, at its original site near the *Comthurey*; still the conveying of several columns and consoles to the Bonn churchyard, for the erection of a similar building there, is at least preserving a faint memento of this plastic monument.—The Bonn churchyard conceals many interesting cenotaphs, such as that of the widow and son of Schiller. The tomb also of Niebuhr, erected by his pupil, Fred. Will. IV., of Prussia, deserves notice. It is an original-looking construction of grey freestone, with a marble medallion portrait of the historian. The grave of Rehfues, the illustrator of Italy, is also remarkable—and Schlegel's tomb will hereafter impart yet a greater interest to this cemetery. Still all our modern mortuary monuments cannot be set on a par with those of mediæval, far less of classic antiquity; if it may not appear altogether, that the Christian system of the world (*Weltanschauung*) be incommensurate to a proper setting of memorials for the departed. Nevertheless, mediæval sculptors and stonemasons were more successful than we are.

THE ALTERATIONS IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

SIR,—Touching your remarks on the projected alterations in Westminster Abbey, will you allow me to make a few suggestions on a published letter on this subject, addressed to the Dean and Chapter, by "A Clergyman of the Church of England." Every one who knows any thing of such matters, must join with the writer of that letter in deprecating the proposal of placing the congregation in the transepts—though, by the way, one benefit I see likely to result from such a move, would be the destruction of those hideous heathenish monuments which now disfigure them, and which would certainly prevent any thing like devotion.

His other position is equally strong, viz., that it is a most dangerous principle to admit that the necessity of providing room for the congregation, sanctions the violation of ecclesiastical precedent. Though he does not seem aware that not only at St. Patrick's, but "in this country," the sad effects of such a principle are visible, for at one cathedral (Bristol) a parcel of red-legged schoolboys are to be seen every Sunday, crowded round the altar, on the very sacrarium, and close against the east wall.

His general idea of making the nave available for worshippers, not of the choral body, is undoubtedly the right one, but there are some points in his plan which seem open to very grave objection.

The first of these is placing the stalls and choir under the lantern, and so marring the whole plan of the church as regards the chancel, transepts, and nave. Surely the stalls cannot with any propriety be placed further eastward than the easternmost piers of the *nave*?

Another objectionable point in this plan seems to be, that a passage of only four feet is left from the western door to the choir, whereas five feet is the least that should be allowed even in a parish church, and six feet would not be more than enough where bishops and dignitaries may walk in procession, as at the recent consecration of bishops.

As Westminster Abbey is not the only collegiate church where fresh arrangements are contemplated, any step which is taken there will be of vast importance, not only as regards Westminster, but as a precedent for other cathedrals.—I am, Sir, &c.,

AN ECCLESIOLOGIST.

August 26th, 1847.

THE SPIRIT THAT SHOULD ANIMATE OUR ARTISTS.

SIR,—In reading the first of the excellent papers on the "Positive Science involved in the Fine Arts," I was much pleased with the following observation: "Let us exert ourselves in the capacity of humble pioneers of progress—content to bow at the altar of pure truth rather than indulge a morbid craving after popularity."

I had intended sending you a few thoughts of my own upon the last part of this observation, but prefer, for obvious reasons, to forward you an extract from a sermon preached by Archdeacon Hare, in Trinity College Chapel, at the annual commemoration, December, 1829. That the spirit breathed throughout the whole of that sermon may be more and more the language of our architects especially, as well as of all who play a prominent part in this our modern drama, is the ardent wish of, Sir, your obedient servant,

ΦΙΛΟΣ.

After speaking of the law of self-sacrifice, as equally binding on the poet, the Archdeacon proceeds, "I can merely hint at the manner in which the same truths are exemplified in the history of the arts. Whether the artist has hewn out his ideas from the bowels of the earth, or has borrowed the pencil of the sun to express them, nothing in either art is truly admirable unless we lose sight of the *artist* in his *work*—unless he has suppressed his own personal consciousness, and has partly a sort of transmigration into the person he was portraying, or the idea he was embodying. When our attention is called aside from the beauty of the work to wonder at the skill of the artist,—when we thus hear the voice of the prompter, we see that the whole is struck, and turn away in disgust. For admiration is never given readily except to those who do not challenge it: they who would take the first place are bid go down to the last. Thus selfishness is the parent of that affectation, which is the besetting sin of modern art, and from which our artists find it almost impossible to disenthrall themselves. It is somewhat singular that when a work is free from such affectation we call it natural; as it were from a lurking consciousness,—awakened by looking at that which is ideal, and which therefore should represent us as we ought to be,—that selfishness is not man's real and primary, but only his artificial, secondary nature, a coating of smoke and dirt, the fumes and dregs of our souls, whereby the beauty and brightness of the original picture has been grievously defaced, and in most cases well nigh destroyed. If any one asks, how it comes to pass that works entitled to the name of natural were so much more abundant in ancient times than they have been in modern, an answer may perhaps be suggested by the consideration, that the spirit of the individual merged in that of the citizen much more completely in ancient days than it has ever done since; and, with reference to the bulk of mankind, much more completely than it has ever done in the spirit of the Christian. Added to which, a national spirit always tends to foster whatever will heighten the nation's outward glory; whereas Christianity, at least, since the reformation, has rather drawn men's minds away from that which is merely symbolical, and led them to seek for more immediate spiritual expressions of their ideas.

While self-consciousness has become more vivid in all, those in whom it has been transfigured into a higher consciousness have sought to manifest Christ by more direct methods than those of the arts. Before the Reformation, however, it was the Christian spirit swaying and overruling the spirit of the natural man, that gave birth to whatever is most excellent in modern painting and architecture.

In both, the aim of the artists was not to set forth their own glory, but the glory of God, according to their view of what would contribute to it: and so entirely had the selfish principle been subdued in the great architects who built our cathedrals, that they did not even take thought to have their names preserved. They were content to live, and they do live, in their works. Hence, we see that true genius necessarily implies a moral struggle and a victory, a struggle against the principle of selfishness, and a victory over it; and this affords a higher ground and sanction for the admiration which all nations have entertained for genius, while, at the same time, it helps to explain the irrepressible feeling that there is a latent bond of union between genius and virtue."

MAN *versus* TIME.

The following lines were suggested by a well-known verse of Byron.*

Many a column and many a stone
Have been by the hand of man o'erthrown,
And many a pile would now remain
Where we sigh and regret o'er their ruins in vain,
If left unto time; but the spoiler, man,
Swift as time flies, still keeps in the van,
And palace and fane, and dome and hall,
Thus swept from the face of this earthly ball,
Leave scarce a stone or a column to tell
Where kings in their pride have loved to dwell.
Then out upon man! who anticipates time,
As witness the cities destroyed in their prime:
Agrigentum, Nineveh, Balbeck and Rome,
Carthage, Palmyra,—Oasis and Home,
By barbarous man, a frail creature of clay,
Broken, dashed down, and swept away,
Whilst Time creeps on with his scythe and his glass,
And sighs o'er the ruin that hath come to pass.
Then out upon man, and not upon time,—
What will not man do in passion or wine?
Out upon man! who for ever will leave
But enough of the past for the future to grieve.

OTHA M. ALDERSON.

* "Two or three columns, and many a stone,
Marble and granite, with perfect contempt,
Have spoil'd Time: it will crumble to dust
One day in Time: it will crumble to dust
Of the temple: come hither, thou traveller, to view
Time which hath been, and Art that which is:
What we have left of the works of man,
Remnants of things which have passed away,
Fragments of stone reared by creatures of clay."

NUREMBERG.—The restoration of the church of St. Lawrence, remembered by all who have visited this most interesting of foreign cities, is nearly completed. A correspondent of the *Athenæum* says:—The painted-glass windows are undergoing the last touches: but though the finest and most cunning artists have been employed, the celebrated Volkamer window remains, as it ever was, unrivalled. The depth and brightness of the colours in this window are almost without parallel. The houses—which constitute, after all, the real glory of Nuremberg—are in admirable condition; great pains being taken to preserve the stone carvings from the wearing hand of time. The subterranean passages, which extend under the streets and houses here of more than half the town, are very curious: they were constructed to afford the magistrates the means of security and escape in case of a sudden rising of the populace. As a bit of fine-art gossip, it may be mentioned, that the king of Bavaria is at Aschaffenburg, superintending the building of his Pompeian villa.

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